

The BULLETIN

Of The
Columbia Scholastic Press Advisers Association

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Bryan Barker, Editor

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How To Work With Your Staff To Produce The Best Yearbook

By Calvin J. Medlin

The Professor of Journalism and Graduate Manager of Student Publications, Kansas State College, is the author of a text, "School Yearbook Editing and Management," published by the Kansas State College Press, which is now being used by 60 or 70 colleges and high schools.

Perhaps the most difficult aspect of being adviser to the yearbook is finding a time to meet and work with the different members of the staff. If the job is to be done well the individuals doing the work must have a regular time and place to meet. It should be on school time and, of course, in the school building.

The second most important requirement for producing a good book is to have a staff properly trained to do the job. It is the responsibility of the adviser to see that these two conditions are met.

It sometimes is difficult to sell this idea to the administration. It may be necessary to point out that the director of the school band does not attempt to give a concert with students who are not properly trained. Most band members usually have had many years of private music lessons. Then too, a time is scheduled for rehearsals. The same situation usually prevails regarding the orchestra, debate team, sports, and other activities. The yearbook records in enduring form the efforts of the staff, and it should be done in a manner to reflect credit on them, the adviser, and the school administration.

More and more advisers are insisting that a regular credit course be required of the major members of the annual staff. One plan that

has been effective is to arrange a course so that one hour each week can be given to recitation and two or three hours to laboratory work. In some schools where a journalism course is already offered, it is an easy matter to divide the class so some of its members are assigned to working on the annual and others on the school newspaper.

It is desirable to adopt an elementary text book on yearbook production that will discuss in detail such important matters as:

1. the functions of the yearbook.
2. Planning the book in detail.
3. Getting pictures that tell the story.
4. Writing and editing copy.
5. Working with the printer.
6. Producing the book on schedule.
7. Budgeting and controlling finances.
8. Methods of raising revenue.

If the staff really understands the functions of the book they are producing they will not spend much time arguing about such unimportant matters as whether or not to include baby pictures, class wills, and personal snapshots.

If the first few lab periods are used to plan a page-by-page dummy of the book, the battle is half won. With a detailed plan of the book in the hands of the editor and adviser, the work of the photograph-

ers, artists, copy writers, and printers can move along promptly and smoothly.

It's important for the staff to know the kind of pictures needed for good reproductions in the annual. If they are taught how to arrange individuals in group pictures and informal poses, they will strive to do the job right. They can obtain better pictures with a minimum of effort and expense if they follow a definite plan.

Supervision of copy writing and editing can be an almost impossible job for the adviser unless the students are taught in advance the kind of copy needed to tell the story. A study of a few good yearbooks and picture magazines will show the staff members what is required in the way of body copy, headlines, and cutlines. If a day or two is spent early in the fall on each of these phases of writing it is surprising how often certain individuals will show a special aptitude for writing headlines or cutlines or for editing copy. With this knowledge of special aptitudes the adviser can make an intelligent division of the work and thus expedite the production of the book.

The staff of the annual should make full use of the advice and help which the printer and engraver working on the book usually is glad to extend. Many concerns make a specialty of school annuals and often do the work for half a dozen to several hundred books in one year. Most of these large companies have representatives who call on the schools at intervals during the year. Some of the better qualified men can give excellent advice on how to develop the theme, plan the dummy, get pictures, and methods of financing the undertaking. Instruction books loaned by some printers and en-

gravers to the staff can be used as supplementary texts by the class. They usually have detailed instructions on how to prepare and mark pictures and copy for the particular firm furnishing the instruction book.

Probably the greatest single advantage to having a class in yearbook production is that it makes it easier to produce the book on schedule. When the class meets two or three times each week there is no excuse for duplication of effort. Each individual can be given a definite assignment that needs to be done and one he has the ability to do.

The business staff should have instruction on the budgeting and control of finances. They can raise the money to do the job if they know the most effective methods to use in selling subscriptions, advertising, and other proven methods of raising revenue.

Most advisers who teach a course in yearbook production find that it makes the job of advising the annual easier and produces a better yearbook. They feel they are training students in the technical know-how of the publishing business and giving them training in business methods. The training and information thus acquired can be used in almost any business or profession the student may enter later.

However, the adviser must remember that the educational value to the staff is distinctly, sharply subordinated to the goal of giving the school the finest, worthiest book within its means. The educational training offered the staff members is purely a by-product. The experience has high value only as it produces a good book. The staff member who has only a small part in producing a really fine book will get better training than

the editor in chief of a slovenly, fumbling, amateurish product. The adviser must assume the responsi-

bility of producing a good book as well as affording staff members a worthwhile educational experience.

Making The Most Out Of Your Mimeographed Newspaper

By Mrs. Dorothy S. Groff

Adviser, "The Welshman," mimeographed newspaper of Caenarvon Township High School, Morgantown, Penna.

A newspaper that is entirely the work of students—a mimeographed paper can be just that. Probably no other staff can take so much pride in the finished periodical because each has spent so much time in producing it. From the first assignment to the distribution of the completed paper students have been responsible for every detail.

The editor's job is the same for all types of papers so far as assigning and collecting articles and making corrections are concerned. For the mimeographed publication he must indicate specific directions for typists concerning the number of letters per line and spacing of material.

In some schools the commercial classes are responsible for all typing and mimeographing. Typists should have at least one year of experience. Probably the best results will come from those students who want to work on the paper. In order to keep the right side of the finished column even, it will be necessary to use some device, such as completing a line with diagonal strokes. The proof reader can count these and indicate where double spacing is to be done. It some cases it will be necessary to crowd letters in words on the stencil; this is an art which many typists do not readily acquire. Another difficult thing to get students to

do is to divide a word properly if it must be continued on another line.

After the rough copy is typed and proof read, the editor must compose the page, leaving room for headlines and any desired art. Master pages can have the lines numbered to correspond with those on the stencils. The rough copy can be cut out and pasted on the master sheet; in this way the editor can more easily visualize the finished page. He should consult his artists about any drawings that are to appear on the page. It will also be a good idea for the editor to keep a list of small items and quotations which may be used to fill up columns.

At this stage the master sheet is ready for stencil cutting. Typists may need to be reminded to use a light touch over spots where correction fluid was used. Once more the proof reader indicates any errors on the finished stencil. After these are corrected, the page is ready for headlines.

Headlines may be made with the use of lettering guides purchased from one of numerous mineograph supply companies or they may be typed in capitals. Lettering guides come in many styles and sizes. Combinations of sizes, as well as capital and lower case letters, lend to a varied page appearance. Head-

lines of one size or style can become monotonous.

The artist is the last person to work on the stencil. His creative features will brighten up the pages. He will probably use several sizes of styli and numerous shading patterns to produce the desired effect. This equipment may also be purchased. Although a mimeoscope is useful, it is not necessary. Patience and a steady hand are necessary. If the artist puts his own work on the stencil, he is more apt to include all the details of the drawing.

After a final check by the editor, and possibly the adviser, the stencil is ready to be mimeographed and the finished sheets assembled.

This basic work is the same for all mimeographed publications, but there is a wide difference in the standards of various papers. The grade of paper, the make-up of the pages, the accuracy with which stencils are cut, and the clearness of the mimeographing vary with schools. All papers can achieve a high rating in these factors if the staffs and advisers are determined to do their best. Competition, such as is provided by state and national contests, may tend to make a staff more conscious of a paper's appearance. Exchanging papers with other schools will likewise provide interest and new ideas. The size of a school is not necessarily a factor where a good paper is concerned; the attitude of the staff and the student body's spirit are largely responsible. If the paper is one of which the students are proud, it will not be difficult to select a good staff. A few good workers are better than a large disinterested staff.

A paper acquires an individuality by the special features it possesses. It may have two or three columns. The two column paper is

easier done, but three columns lend themselves to more variation in make-up. With three columns no two pages need be alike. Readers note this distinction and look forward to each issue. The location of the nameplate, as well as the style of lettering, can be changed to give the front page a new look.

Some schools may be fortunate in having artists who can draw illustrations for stories and other original designs. The smaller schools may have its headaches here, but books of drawings are available for a nominal fee at most mimeograph supply houses. These may be traced on stencils, and some of the larger or more intricate sketches may be purchased in stencil form and inserted where desired.

Color can add to a paper. Although it takes time, the use of colored ink is an asset. An entire page of one color is easy to make, but several colors on a page produce an artistic effect. To use colored ink one must remove the ink pad from the mimeograph machine, place a protective cover over the cylinder, insert a new ink pad, and paint it with ink in the desired areas. A new pad must be used for each color, but these may be kept and reused so long as they do not become hard. For best results a separate stencil must be cut for each color used on a page. When all the stencils which will be used for one page are held together to the light, the page appears exact in every detail. Caution must be used not to change margins on the machine until all of one page is completed. If one is not particular about colors running together, several may be painted on an ink pad and only one stencil used. A simple design in color used as a back-

ground for black printing is attractive also. Entire news pages done in a color add appeal as will the occasional use of colored paper.

A well organized staff can produce an issue at one or two week intervals. The small school may have difficulty in finding sufficient time for a biweekly paper.

These suggestions for making the most out of a mimeographed paper will not by themselves make a good publication. The writing must be

interesting and correct. Good journalistic form is another area, one which concerns all types of papers.

A good newspaper does as much to advertise the school as do the athletic teams or the band; it can effect changes in the school; it can sell ideas to the community. A mimeographed paper can do all this and at the same time give staff members the feeling that each has played a leading role in a journalistic production.

Are Poor Lead Paragraphs The No. 1 Fault Of School Papers?

By Stuart P. Armstrong

A judge in the March 1955 newspaper contest of the Columbia Scholastic Press Association told the editor of The Bulletin that he got tired of writing in scorebooks about dull, long, date-beginning, or incomplete lead paragraphs. The editor agrees with this judge even to the point of saying that the poor lead is the major fault of one half of all school newspapers. As good lead paragraphs are a noteworthy feature of "The Jackson Journal" of Stonewall Jackson High School, Charleston, W. Va., the editor decided to reprint an article written for this publication by that paper's faculty adviser, Mr. Stuart P. Armstrong. When previously printed in these columns it appeared under the heading of "Are Poor Leads Killing Your Stories?"

Leads are invitations to read a story.

The headline attracts attention; the lead invites or repels. If the invitation is skillfully worded and is alluring enough the reader goes on to the "party," to the reading of the story. If the invitation is drably done and the "party" sounds dull, the reader is likely to refuse the invitation and attend another "party."

How can good leads be written? How can high school students be trained to use a variety of leads? Here are some suggestions that may help new advisers of school papers.

First, in my Journalism classes, we study (from text-books) different types of leads. Second, we study

samples of these different types, by consulting school paper exchanges and seeing how the leads are used in actual practice. (Examples are cut from school papers to illustrate each type of lead. We make our own list of about 35 types). Third, we study the writing of leads. In this last case, students are given a reporter's set of notes gathered in collecting news for a story; then they try writing the most appropriate leads to be used for it, not the entire story, just the lead.

Surveys, actual practice, and a study of leads of both school and metropolitan papers, seem to indicate that the one-sentence lead is preferred by a majority of publications. A one-sentence lead must

realize that it is doing the work of several sentences and thus must be a more highly polished product than the rest of the story.

True, beginners tend either to crowd too much into such a lead or, fearful of doing just that, too little. What are the natural questions that a reader wants to know about the facts in the story? What are the facts? To answer them readily and in order of importance are two basic elements a reporter must understand.

It is easy to be arbitrary about the length of leads, but difficult and unnecessary to stick to a rule in all cases. "Use the number of words needed to tell the facts" is the foundation rule, but reporters like limits. To say that an average lead usually has thirty to forty words is a self-imposed limitation; some stories need more, some less. It is also obvious that it isn't always the *number* of words that count; it's what the words *say* that's important.

After a student has tried writing a lead or two, he is asked to check the lead to see if it answers a reader's questions quickly. The first dozen words of the lead are the key words; if they are wasted, the reader may never get to the rest of the story.

Let's see some samples of the evolution of a lead. Here are three stages in the writing of a lead, as it was done first, then revised, and finally published:

(1) It has just been announced that a special assembly will be held next week to honor Pan-American day here at school.

(2) The Spanish Club of school is planning to hold a special assembly next week to honor Pan-American day.

(3) Pan-American day will be celebrated next Tuesday, April 15,

at an 8:35 a.m. assembly in the auditorium by a program called "La Fiesta," sponsored by La Terulia, Spanish Club.

In studying these three samples note that the first one wasted eight words before it got to the key-word, assembly. Notice, too, the absence of answers to a reader's normal questions of who, what, when, where, etc.

The second sample is certainly an improvement over the first. However, we train reporters to avoid the use of weak words for paragraph beginnings, and articles are among the weakest. Also, other questions about the assembly are unanswered.

Finally the third lead is not perfect, but at least it answers some questions and puts first things first.

Thus, practicing with new stories is the first big step a beginner takes in the writing of leads. Other types of leads seem easier after the news story.

Interview leads, for example, often begin with a striking statement. Below are some sample leads from interviews published in our school paper:

(1) "Success is due more to hard work than breaks," stated Miss Roberta Peters, Metropolitan opera star, who appeared here October 14 as the guest soloist of the Charleston Symphony Orchestra.

(2) "Anyone who would go into this profession would have to be a psycho about music," exclaimed Hazel Scott, noted concert pianist.

(3) "Freedom of the press is not a gift from God; it is a gift from the American people," stated James Street, newspaperman and author.

(4) "I love people!" So says Mrs. Ivy Priest, newly-appointed treasurer of the United States, who spoke here last week at a Lincoln Day dinner.

(5) "If God calls you to be a preacher, don't stoop to be a king." (Eddie Martin, evangelist).

Interviews otherwise to avoid monotony, may begin as these two samples:

(1) Frank Paul Lo Vecchio, better known as Frankie Lane, Mr. Rhythm, has always sung and intends to keep on doing so.

(2) In Charleston for the purpose of speaking at the annual Lincoln Day rally here, Republican Senator and presidential aspirant Robert A. Taft of Ohio met the press Monday, February 1, at the club room of the Daniel Boone hotel.

Feature stories have a wide variety of leads possible, unorthodox ones having predominance. A few examples follow:

(1) Vacation time means fun time!

(2) Halloween means lots of fun now, but in early days it was one of the most dreaded nights in the year.

(3) "Jane, what are you going to wear to the dance Saturday night?"

(4) Next to the wedding ring and perhaps a class ring, the ring most girls would like to have most is a birthstone ring.

(5) Quick Henry — the penicillin!

Here comes that flu bug again.

(6) Have you ever spent a day in the dean's office.

(7) Pandemonium.

Sports story writers apparently have developed lead types all their own, although the majority favors the conventional summary lead.

(1) Stonewall Jackson finally got the "Old Elk Bucket" back last Saturday as they downed a game Charleston high Mountain Lion combine, 14-7, at Laidley Field.

(2) Breaking six records and

scoring 99½ points to second place Charleston's total of 46, the Stonewall thinclads ran away from the rest of the field last Friday in their own Invitational track meet.

(3) Coach Pud Hutson's Stonewall Generals climaxed their '52 basketball campaign with a resounding 80-68 victory over the Red Dragons of St. Albans Tuesday night on the SJ court.

One good class project in a study of leads is to choose well-written leads from school and professional papers, give the facts in assorted order to the students, and let them write their own leads. Special recognition can always be given those who write the same lead that was printed, or a better one. By having some of these leads worked out on the blackboard, a class may profit by the discussion that follows.

Good leads cannot make a poor story good, but poor leads certainly kill a story. Any adviser who polls the reading-appeal of stories in his newspaper can attest to that fact.

Let's brighten our leads. Let's take the reader by the hand and guide him into the story proper. How long he stays there is up to the reporter.

KIPLING WROTE APT JINGLE ABOUT LEAD PARAGRAPHS

Advisers often have considerable difficulty in getting students to write a good lead paragraph to a straight news article.

Rudyard Kipling, a journalist in his young days in India, put together a jingle which listed the essential things needed to write a good lead. Here is the jingle:

"I have six honest serving men:
They taught me all I knew:
Their names are Where and
What and When
And How and Why and
Who."

Oregon H.S. Mentor Discusses Choosing An Editor In Chief

By Florence Sweet

The adviser of "The Lantern" of Pendleton High School, Pendleton, Oregon, writes out, at the suggestion of the editor, some thoughts on choosing an editor in chief for her newspaper. A similar article appeared in The Bulletin for March by Mr. Stuart P. Armstrong of Stonewall Jackson High School, Charleston, West Virginia.

Who will be editor of our high school paper next year? That is the question almost every adviser is asking herself at this time of year.

In some schools, the editor's duties will keep him on the job all year. In others, a new editor is chosen every semester; but whether the school be large or small, the editor's duties will be fundamentally the same.

Some advisers hold to the idea that the all-year job really gives an editor a chance to develop, a chance to know his staff, and to expand and develop its potentialities. Some advisers contend that a change of editors in the middle of the year might result in a clash of personalities within the staff. To remove the first editor in the middle of a brilliant year, brilliant through training his staff, working with reporters, adviser, and promoting public relations, is often a mistake. Other advisers believe, and it is true, that a change in the middle of the year trains more than one editor. In Pendleton High School, the editor is chosen for the full year; but should there be two staff members equal in every way, we have been known to choose co-editors, but is has only happened twice and both times they were girls.

Out in eastern Oregon, the towns and cities are long distances apart

and we think about an editor as one who can bring those towns closer through good public relations, through sports, and their local enterprises. We think of an editor as one who can bring the school to the community and interest the community in the school by attending service club luncheons and reporting on school activities. He must be someone who can interview with equal ease the national celebrities who come to our annual Round-Up, as well as our local Round-Up queen. We want him or her to be at ease when he speaks. He must be well-informed. He must establish good relations with the surrounding towns by drawing attention to their good qualities rather than attention to them as only rivals in athletics. He must be a straight thinker when he writes, for he represents the "voice of the school." An aptitude for newspaper work is commendable, of course, but the lack of it maybe overcome if the interest is there. He must have a type of leadership in which the staff has faith. He must have a cooperative attitude. He must have the ability to work confidentially and to work calmly against time.

Last year a boy who had been on the business staff was chosen editor. True, he had done some writing, but his ad make-up was

outstanding. In his job as editor, he simply extended his make-up ability to the whole paper and his writing was a business venture, a business of selling the paper to the school and the community. He was one of the best editors we ever had and is now majoring in journalism at college, equally at home on the editorial or business staff of his college job. He was the type of editor that is respected by his staff not for pure popularity, but for his judgment, his constructive criticism, his "know-how," his personality, tactfulness, and self-confidence. When we find an editor like that, we keep him for a year. Staff members emulate and imitate his good qualities and carry on the changes he has made. When he or she goes to college, we watch with interest his progress there. He is not our editor for one year, but for all time.

I have in mind a girl editor of several years ago who took over the staff for three months while I was in the hospital. I consider myself a fairly strict disciplinarian, but she was more so. Not only was she a leader, but she had the confidence of her staff so much so that they sent in a copy of one issue of their paper, unknown to me, to a nearby college for criticism and it came back marked "Tops, keep up the excellent work." When it came

time to enter a national contest she sent in her issues and entry blanks and won All-American.

My editor this year is a girl trained on the editorial staff, but who in the afternoons works at the local daily paper. Her position is in the advertising department, and she will probably major in some field of advertising at college next year. The needed interest in journalism that we sometimes overlook in choosing editors is a vital thing and the interest need not always be in a special field.

Do I prefer a girl or a boy editor? Or shall I say does the staff prefer a girl or a boy? Well, they already know whom they will select, and probably have known since the middle of the year. They have observed, as well as I, who has the "know-how," who gives unselfishly of his time, who is always approachable, who is dependable, friendly, and fair. If the pattern fits a girl, she's the one for me. If it fits a boy, he's the editor.

Do I know who the editor will be? Yes, for I have watched the staff grow through two years of journalistic work. It is seldom that my ideas about the choice of next year's editor differ from those of my upper staff. We choose an editor to develop him. We choose an editor to develop us.

Notes From The Editor's Desk

"I didn't see you at the Columbia Scholastic Press Association convention luncheon in the Waldorf-Astoria hotel today. Were you there?" This question was put to the editor of *The Bulletin* as he was speeding from New York towards Mercersburg, Penna., by train in the late afternoon of Saturday, March 12. Certainly the

editor was there! No wonder he wasn't seen, for 4,225 had lunch on that joyous occasion. And that joyous occasion was made more joyous by the good food and the good company. Verily, verily, there is nothing on earth to be compared to that climactic CSPA convention luncheon in New York's Waldorf-Astoria Hotel!

The editor wonders if the Waldorf-Astoria commissariat has ever served a larger number at one sitting? He doubts it.

* * *

Numbers, of course, don't mean everything. Sometimes it is well to set some of them down for the sake of knowing what the record is. For instance, 1,366 newspapers and magazines were entered in this year's CSPA contest, and 4,438 delegates were registered.

* * *

Did you as an adviser — if you were at the Convention, that is — go to the tea at the Men's Faculty Club of Columbia University that Friday afternoon of March 11? If you didn't, you missed something. The editor looked in, drank more than his share of coffee, talked shop and other things to about twenty people, and generally enjoyed the beflowered, tea-cupped gaiety of the occasion. The first 100 women on the scene were lucky, for they got corsages. The editor saw two nuns with these delightful emblems. And into no worthier hands could they have been placed, for they were both representatives of high, successful endeavor in the school press field.

* * *

"And how is Wimpy?" This question was addressed to the editor of The Bulletin by an adviser from far away at the end of the General Meeting of the Columbia Scholastic Press Advisers Association held in the McMillin Theatre on Friday morning, March 11. Wimpy, it should be stated, is the editor's little black dog, a very mongrel one, who usually goes wherever the editor goes. How that person found out about him is difficult to guess. One person on that March 11 occasion was evident-

ly so impressed by what was said about that ubiquitous canine that he — or she — sent a dollar bill to the editor wrapped inside a short, unsigned, typewritten note. The note read: "I heard your story about Wimpy in the McMillin Theatre. Here is a dollar to buy him some more oatmeal-and-pecan cookies." Though a dog, as Lord Byron said, may have all of man's virtues and none of his vices, he cannot send a thank-you note. The editor, at least, is appreciative of what someone did.

* * *

Something indirectly associated with the Convention irritated the editor and still does.

An adviser from a Maryland school was responsible for a large delegation of students staying at a large hotel not far away from Times Square in New York City. One evening, when the adviser could not be with her teen-age group, one girl, feeling distinctly uncomfortable, if not downright sick with grip or something, felt that she should consult a doctor. As she was in the hotel she telephoned the house physician. Would he come up and what would he charge? Yes, he would come up and the charge would be \$15. As that girl was staying in New York on a budget, she couldn't afford to pay a doctor such a fee. She therefore had to put aside the question of professional medical attention.

There are two major points of interest to this story: one is more-or-less immediate and the other is vague and perhaps distant.

The more-or-less immediate one. Each year many advisers of school newspapers, magazines, and year-books take delegations of students to New York for the CSPA conven-

tion and look after them — the closeness of this depending on the age of the group — in the New York hotels. In the future when an adviser makes a reservation for a delegation of students at a New York hotel, would it not be well to inquire about the cost of the services of the house physician?

The vague and perhaps distant one. Doctors as a group have spent and are spending large sums of money to fight the trend towards the socialization of medicine. The writer of these words, too, has not much use for things controlled by what Winston Churchill has called "the heavy-footed state." But one doctor in a New York hotel has probably caused over 20 teen-agers to think a little more critically, and perhaps differently, about doctors and medical services than they ever thought before.

"Were you short of hyphens, or didn't you know any better?" So reads a sentence in a letter, a facetious one, to the editor on the subject of hyphens. The March 1955 issue of this publication contained an article by Stuart P. Armstrong (page 3) on choosing an editor in chief, and the words "editor in chief" were not hyphenated. And this alleged *faux pas* on the part of The Bulletin editor brought forth the comment above. Well, what the editor of The Bulletin doesn't know is some times rather amazing. But the hyphens were left out of that famous three-word combination because Webster's New International Dictionary (Second Edition) doesn't put them there. As adviser to his own student-written, six-page weekly publication, a newspaper, The Bulletin editor has a rule which reads: "Webster's first choice is to be the accepted authority for all spell-

ings." In leaving out the hyphens, then, in "editor in chief," the editor of The Bulletin was being guided by a regulation of his own making.

"Humor is something funny but not silly." This apt and meaningful definition of humor was given at one of the sectional meetings of the 1954 CSPA convention when the editor tried to address the Elementary School Division on the subject of humor. This definition was printed in the January 1955 issue of this publication. Just before this year's 31st convention of CSPA, the editor received word from Miss Martha E. Dimmick, adviser of "Sunrise Herald" in School No. 1 in Scotch Plains, N. J., that this definition of humor had been supplied by Tracy Wood, a ten year old girl in the fifth grade and a member of the delegation from

THE BULLETIN

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The editor is Mr. Bryan Barker, active editorial faculty adviser of a weekly, six-page paper, The Mercersburg News, The Mercersburg Academy, Mercersburg, Penna.

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Scotch Plains.

When the editor addressed the same group this year on the same subject, one little girl added to the definition as follows: "Humor is something funny but not silly and

is not insulting."

Miss Dimmick was present this year at the tea given at the Men's Faculty Club of Columbia University during the afternoon of Friday, March 11.

Judge Lists Some Weak Points He Found In Contest Newspapers

By Charles T. Hubbard

As judge of nearly 100 school newspapers in this year's CSPA contest, I found the weak points to be, in decreasing order, as follows: 1. Lead paragraphs too long, too many on one page beginning with a date, and too many not dealing with the real news of the article. 2. Too many incorrectly counted headlines, "label" headlines, and one-line headlines. 3. Unattractive make-up on front pages and, particularly, inside and back pages. 4. Cuts with insufficient or even no written matter beneath them. 5. Too little use made of boxes.

1. *Lead paragraphs too long, too many on one page beginning with a date, and too many not dealing with the real news of the article.*

In probably thirty scorebooks I wrote some such expression as, "Many of your lead paragraphs are too long." I counted leads or something having 15, 20, 30, or even 35 lines in them. These long leads were the most recurring bad feature in all the papers I scored.

The New York Times used to have some long lead paragraphs. Yet on the day, April 7, these words are being written the Times has on its front page lead paragraphs of three lines (one), four lines (one), five (one), six (four), seven (three), and eight (three).

I have always felt that the essen-

tial lead-facts of any story can be stated in six lines, sometimes less, and only very rarely more.

Any article, almost, can begin with a date. But if half the articles on a page do — and such was the case in more than one paper — what, in the way of style, is there to attract the would-be reader?

Let me quote a professional opinion from page 74 of "Journalism and the Student Publication" by Maguire and Spong (published by Harper and Brothers, New York):

"The important words in any lead sentence are the first three or four. They are wasted if you give them over to weak phrases . . . Place phrases and time phrases — always weak phrases — should unusually be avoided at the beginning of a lead sentence . . . The news story which begins: 'Last night in Fairchild Hall,' or 'At a meeting of the Parent-Teachers Association,' or 'At 2 o'clock next Sunday afternoon,' almost invariably is a badly written story . . . An examination of hundreds of student newspapers demonstrates that the weakest of all student stories are those which begin with place or time elements."

There were too many instances of leads not dealing with the real news of the story. In these cases the reader was left to find out — if he chose to be bothered — what was what in paragraphs three or five or

further on. Such stories sometimes had headlines that bore little relationship to that most important paragraph in any news story — the lead one.

(Editor's note: For further detailed information on this lead aspect of writing news stories read carefully the article on page 5 by Mr. Stuart P. Armstrong, adviser of The Jackson Journal, Stonewall Jackson High School, Charleston, West Virginia. The Journal puts into practice the ideas on leads advocated by its adviser in that article. The Maguire and Spong book named above also has some good and practical information in chapter 5 on writing the lead and varying the lead.)

2. *Too many incorrectly counted headlines, "label" headlines, and one-line headlines.*

I did not see any paper which used throughout the all-capital style (as in The New York Times) of headlines. The flush-left, upper and lower case style (as in the New York Herald Tribune) has become the custom in nearly all school papers. I am happy to note this. I know by experience that the flush-left system is easier to write and, because it usually uses upper and lower case letters, easier to read. But some school papers have flush-left headlines which are chaotic in appearance. Sometimes one line in a two- or a three-line head would be less than a quarter filled. And when that was a feature of too many headlines on a page the effect was not attractive to the eye. Furthermore, I noticed that so many of those haphazard, lazy, no-count heads — for so they seemed — did not tell the news they should or could have done if the lines had been filled out more. Users of the flush-left system should be aware of the maximum and minimum

count for each line and stick to both. In so doing they will have more-newsy, more-informative, and better-looking headlines.

With some papers it seemed obvious that the headline writers did not have — or if they did, did not make use of — a headline schedule. How youthful, amateur, student journalists can be expected to write reasonably correct headlines without one I do not know.

One-line heads over straight news articles, except perhaps in certain places on small, three- or four-column sheets, are not very satisfactory — unless a specially-devised headline scheme of the right-sized, varied kind of type is used throughout the paper. I saw many places where two lines would have been more informative and better looking.

Can anything of value be said for the "label" heads used issue by issue such as "Book Review," "Exchanges," "Movie"? In every case where I drew attention to "labels" a two-line head which said something could have been written.

3. *Unattractive make-up on front pages and, particularly, inside and back pages.*

To me a school paper should be planned inch by inch on each page. As an adviser to a weekly six-page paper I want a newsy, eye-inviting, reader-inviting page without that page being undignified let alone cheap and blatant. To attain this desirable state there should be headlines (one column, two column, and sometimes three, depending on the size of the sheet) below the half-way fold of the page, boxes (and humorous ones at that), and, if possible, cuts and cartoons. The medalist winners usually did all these things and more. Papers in the other cate-

gories had such things as all runovers on the back page; news items (even future ones) on the editorial page when there was ample room in that paper for them elsewhere; too small headlines at the top of the inside and back pages; and runovers too small (some less than ten lines) and containing unimportant information to warrant them being bothered with as runovers.

4. *Cuts with insufficient or even no written matter beneath them.*

There must have been at least one hundred cuts, groups and action-athletic shots, in the papers I judged without a word beneath them. Some of them had only one line to save them from being completely unknown in the future, such things as the significant what,

when, etc., being ignored completely. Cuts are expensive. What a pity, then, not to write a minimum of complete information beneath them.

5. *Too little use was made of boxes.*

Many papers below medalist and first place fought shy of the "harmless, necessary" box. With, usually, a narrower column width and bolder type, the box, if no more than, say, three inches long, is a good device for improving the make-up, for relieving areas of "grey printy" matter, for conveying information too brief in itself for more extended treatment, and for telling about little humorous happenings around school. There could be more and better use made of boxes in school papers.

Student Editors Can Help Now To Abolish Electoral College

The March 1955 issue of this publication carried an article headlined, "Students Start Project In Paper To Abolish Electoral College." Read below to see what progress has been made with this project started by some citizenship and journalism students in a Maryland high school.

How powerful is the student press of America? Here is an opportunity for it to test its strength in a project originated, planned, and developed by a class of junior students in Allegany High School, Cumberland, Maryland.

Last October, the project to have the Electoral College abolished and the President of the United States chosen by direct vote of the people was inaugurated by 37 teen-age boys and girls instructed in citizenship and journalism by Miss Mary E. Murray, former president of the Columbia Scholastic Press Advisers Association and former editor of this publication.

Just six months later, April 15, a Resolution, drawn up by the students themselves, was introduced in the House of Representatives by the Honorable DeWitt S. Hyde, Representative from the Sixth Congressional District of Maryland, providing for an amendment to the United States Constitution to abolish the Electoral College.

In introducing the Resolution, Congressman Hyde stated: "The present Electoral College system is antiquated and no longer serves the purpose for which it was originally intended. We need a more realistic method."

The Resolution provides that to

be elected President, if there are only two candidates for the office, a person must receive a majority of the total number of votes cast in the nation and a majority of the votes cast in at least 50% of the States.

If there are more than two candidates for the office, a plurality of the total number of votes cast in the nation and a plurality of the votes in at least 40% of the States are necessary for election.

The Resolution further provides that if no person is so elected, the House of Representatives will choose the President from the three presidential candidates having the highest number of votes and the Senate will choose the vice president from the two candidates for this office having the highest number of votes.

The advantages of this method of election are:

1. It is more democratic.
2. It will prevent the coddling of minority groups. We would return to thinking of government for all the people, instead of making "deals" with a few whose votes in key areas might happen to throw big electoral votes one way or the other.
3. It will provide a popular election within the Federal system. By requiring both a majority of the popular vote of the nation and the popular vote of 50% of the States, it recognizes the importance of the individual voters and the individual States.
4. It will insure real nationwide campaigning every four years. If the individual vote is counted, every party will have to campaign for every possible vote in each State. This will bring the people into closer contact with issues.
5. The Electoral College has already given us ten minority Presi-

dents — and it can do it again.

6. The Electoral College system invites fraud. Senator Lodge told the Senate on January 31, 1941: "By concentrating effort in a few doubtful states, the chance for corrupt electoral practices increases. The close New York State margin of 1,247 stood between Grover Cleveland and 35 electoral votes. Thirty-five votes can mean the difference between victory or defeat. What a temptation for the boss and the machines. What a strategic place for them to stand." If manipulation is invited of just enough votes to change the electoral vote of a big state — the door is wide open to fraud.

7. It will reflect the national will more so than does the present system. The Electoral College failed to elect three men who were the choices of the people: Jackson in 1824, Tilden in 1876, and Cleveland in 1888. It can do it again.

8. It will increase interest in voting. If the voters know that their X on the ballot really means they are choosing their President rather than the men who will elect him, they will vote in greater numbers than ever before. The Democrat in an almost solid Republican State and the lone Republican in one of the States of the "Solid South" will be encouraged to vote because "his" vote will be equal to that of every other voter in the national total.

9. It will strengthen the role of the States. Under the Electoral College system, the 17 largest States can control the election; under the new system, the majority vote in 50% (40% if there are more than two candidates) of the States is required.

10. It will strengthen the two party system. Since candidates will have to campaign nationally for

individual votes, only major parties will be financially able to conduct presidential campaigns of such wide scope.

The student press has never had the opportunity before to test its strength politically. In this non-partisan project, it can make its weight felt in the Congress of the United States for the first time in history.

With the approval and encouragement of Dr. Joseph M. Murphy, director of the CSPA, here is how it can be done:

1. Write editorials, features and news stories explaining and endorsing the Hyde Resolution to abolish the Electoral College in *each issue* of your paper from now until school closes. SEND a copy of each issue with story clearly marked to *each* of your Senators and Representatives, to the Hon. DeWitt S. Hyde, to the CSPA Office in New York, to Alleghany High School in Cumberland, Md., and to your local newspaper.

2. Conduct spot polls in your communities on the Hyde Resolution and publish the results in your school papers.

3. Secure as many signatures of qualified voters in your community as possible to a petition directed to your Congressman or to the Committee on the Judiciary in the House (later to your Senators and the Senate Judiciary Committee) urging him (or them) to vote for the Hyde Resolution for the direct election of the President.

4. Keep the mail rolling by having your parents and friends write post cards or letters, veritably flooding Congress with mail, in support of the Resolution.

5. Have students prepare panel discussions in social studies, Eng-

lish, or journalism classes and present the arguments given above against the Electoral College and for direct election "as provided by the Hyde Resolution" before civic, patriotic, fraternal, and religious groups and, wherever possible, on radio and television.

6. Keep scrapbooks of clippings from students and local papers to send to your Senator as composite proof that your area favors the Hyde Resolution. Forward this when you read that the Resolution has gone to the Senate.

Let's go all out in support of the Hyde Resolution for the direct election of the President and at the same time test the power of the student press in America. Most important of all, whatever you do, **DO IT NOW!**

BROOKLYN MAN TO RETIRE IN JUNE AS PAPER ADVISER

After 50 years of teaching English and a long, long time as an adviser to one of the best newspapers, The Polygon, in the private school field, Mr. Charles S. Mitchell, head of the English department at Brooklyn Poly Prep Country Day School, is to retire this June.

Before coming to Brooklyn Poly 42 years ago, Mr. Mitchell taught one year at Brown university and then seven years at the Peddie School in Hightstown, N. J., where he was head of the English department.

The paper of which he has been the adviser so long is noted for its original, dynamic, high quality.

An Adviser's Advice To The New Year Book Adviser

By Mary H. Hackman

Editorial adviser of "Le Souvenir," yearbook of Glen Burnie High School, Glen Burnie, Maryland.

When a teacher is asked to take over as editorial adviser of a school yearbook, many doubts will assail him. By the time the first deadline is due, he is certain of the fact that he should have said no thank you way back in September. But, to sound a note of optimism, they tell me the final product is well worth the effort.

The problems faced by the brand new adviser are many, but can be surmounted practically. If the adviser is very green, and walks into the job not knowing the difference between *crop* and *cut*, my first suggestion is to burn the midnight oil reading and re-reading *Warren's Yearbook Suggestions*. This pamphlet is one of the best in the field and can be obtained for the asking at most printing offices. Once the general idea is clearly in mind, a good beginning has been made, and the time has come to select an editor and staff. This is probably the most important chore the adviser must undertake.

Editor and Staff. Many schools permit the senior class to elect the editor and business manager for the yearbook. Unless very high standards are maintained, sad results may be obtained. Often the most popular, not the most capable student is selected by the student body. The best solution to this problem is to let the adviser, along with the help of faculty members, select a person who can fill the bill. The editor should be able to get along well with the adviser (and let's face it, that's an important

part of a good anything) and the future staff. Scholarship is an important factor to consider, as the editor will have to give up many hours previously spent in study. If a student can be found who has had previous experience working on a yearbook, plus scholarship and the ability to get along with people, the job of the adviser is well on its way to a successful completion.

After the editor has been selected, the adviser should sit down with him, and together they should fill the remaining positions on the staff. Usually seniors will occupy the more important staff positions. Again, the accent should be placed on the students who can get along well with others, not only the good artist and good writer. This should be stressed primarily because the staff often works under pressure and if people cannot get along well under normal circumstances, the stress and strain of deadlines does not help matters. Often it is best to let the individuals have a choice as to the position they would like to fill. This should go without saying, but everyone works better when he is doing what he enjoys.

Do not neglect the underclassmen when making up the staff of the year book. They can be valuable assets to next year's book after a year or two of experience. Underclassmen can fill the position of class editor effectively, as well as various and sundry other positions.

There are many ways of dividing work, so one person does not have to shoulder the whole responsibility.

ity. Once a theme is selected, and the staff has decided how many sections the book will have, a simple solution is to make one person responsible for each section. Call these people editors and they can, in turn, dish out the work to others whom we will call their call. It is almost always necessary to have a separate art and photography editor to coordinate this important phase of the yearbook.

Theme. The editor and the adviser should have several ideas for themes to present to the entire staff for consideration. The theme may be anything from the informal seasons of the year to the dramatic use of the classical idea of the search for knowledge. Whatever is decided, it should be well understood by each staff member to prevent the book from resembling a Chinese puzzle. Usually there will be a raft of ideas for a theme, but be certain there is one to make for coordination throughout the entire book.

Printer and Photographer. Many schools keep the same printer and photographer year after year, thus eliminating that problem from the already harried adviser. If, however, it is the policy of the school to scout around for a different photographer and printer each year, there are a few things to keep in mind. First and most important, select a printer and photographer as close to home as possible. Perhaps someone located in Timbuktu will print your book for a few hundred dollars less, but a printer close at hand can save the greenhorn much in money and time (avoiding careless errors) and worry. The printer can be the most valuable source of information available to the new adviser; he has a trained staff at his fingertips and can provide you with

many good ideas and solve many of your problems.

A professional photographer is almost a necessity for senior portraits and large groups. Usually cost can be cut to a minimum if an arrangement can be made whereby he can profit from portrait sales. Since the professional photographer cannot always be present for some important event, it is also necessary to draw from local talent — the student photographer. The yearbook should accurately record the year's events and the staff photographers insures a good representation. Your photographer should be guided by staff editors.

Dummy. The dummy is the blueprint which the staff of every yearbook must have to create and coordinate the final product. The printer will provide the staff with scaled paper on which the plan for the book will be drafted. The author suggests that this dummy be left until the very last minute. Use ordinary loose leaf paper and draw up a multitude of dummies. Select and choose, and the plan which is finally placed on the printer's dummy will be accurate and there will be few regrets when the final proof has gone to press. The dummy is well over half the battle, and if the time is well spent here, less time will be required when deadlines are just around the corner.

Producing a yearbook should be an enjoyable and stimulating experience for adviser and staff. There will be headaches, missed deadlines, and lost pictures; but if the book can be read with pride, it is well worth the effort. And, as June rolls around, everyone will probably be able to look back on the hours of hard work and think of them as fun!

Changing To Off-Set Printing Saved Us Money

By Bernard O. Thomas

Adviser, "Westfield Hi's-Eye," Westfield Senior High School, Westfield, N. J., president of the Scholastic Press Association of New Jersey, and a member of the executive council of Quill and Scroll.

Because of a steady increase in the cost of printing our high school newspaper, it became apparent that some radical changes would have to be made quickly or the school newspaper would appear irregularly, and because of the number of advertisements that would have to be carried, its semblance to a newspaper would be coincidental.

Students in our high school receive the high school newspaper as part of a "package" deal. The purchase of a student activity ticket provides the student with a subscription to the school newspaper in addition to admittance to all athletic events, dramas, and musical productions.

This system has many advantages. It means that at the beginning of each school year the staff knows how much money will be available from sales. By adding to this figure the anticipated revenue from advertising, the staff is able to draw up an accurate budget. By simple arithmetic then, it is possible to determine what each issue will cost, divide that amount into the total money available through SAT's and advertising, and arrive at the number of issues that can be printed. With off-set, that is.

The reason this figure can be arrived at only with off-set printing is that the price of each issue remains constant. With letter-press, the figure varies according to the number of pictures used. In the case of our school newspaper, the

difference in individual issues varied as much as fifty to seventy-five dollars per issue.

The student activity ticket is an ideal way of insuring a fixed number of sales and it has the decided advantage of fixing the circulation. There is no fluctuation in the sale of individual issues. But, while its advantages far outweigh the disadvantages, the student activity ticket presents different types of problems. In our school, for example, the price of the SAT has unrealistically remained constant for the past ten years.

This means that although the cost of printing has continually increased, the amount of money apportioned to the school newspaper has remained static. Consequently, the staff is expected to put out today's newspaper at today's prices with yesterday's budget.

It was with much apprehension that the staff turned to off-set printing after having experienced much success with letter-press and its versatility. But the word of the off-set printers had spread quickly and off-set loomed as the panacea to all financial problems.

When it became apparent that the paper would have to be printed off-set or the number of issues would have to be cut, the staff unanimously agreed to try off-set for one year.

Many issues (four pages) printed previously by letter press cost \$200. Now, using the off-set method, the

cost of printing is fixed at \$112. Regardless of how many pictures are used, the price remains the same. By using off-set, the staff has cut the expense of costly art work and plate making of pictures required in the letter-press method.

The chief advantage of off-set printing is that since the entire page is photographed to make a printing plate, there is no additional charge for pictures. Former staffs of our high school paper filled paper with pictures and drawings. Now that we have changed to a method which places no limit on pictures and drawings, the staff, as should have been expected, uses fewer pictures and drawings than ever before.

When the new printing method (new to the staff and adviser but certainly not new in the printing field), new work patterns had to be established. Gone are the glue pots and dummieing which made letter press so interestingly versatile.

The most important thing now is the first (and only) dummy. The editors plan the pages of the newspaper and assign the stories according to the number of words required to fill the space allotted the story in the dummy.

A poster in the journalism room tells the reporters how many words he must write to fill column inches in the paper. The student then writes the story within those confines.

The dummy is carefully measured and the stories and dummy are mailed to the printer. That is the last time the staff sees the paper until it is delivered. This is why such careful planning goes into "readying" the paper for the printer.

It is possible to read proofs; however, that necessitates a trip to

the printer. Since the printer is located many miles from the school, our staff does no proof-reading. The printer proof-reads all copy and, depending on the skill of the printer, this method serves adequately although it denies the students of practice in proof-reading, an important facet of journalism.

The differences in the finished product may be negligible between off-set and letter-press printing, but it doesn't take an experienced journalist to see immediately whether the paper has been printed off-set or letter-press. However, the effectiveness of off-set printing can be increased if the printer has different type faces available and is willing to set some type with a linotype or monotype machine. At present, charges are made for setting type with the linotype or monotype.

And naturally, as the staff becomes more experienced with off-set, the newspaper will improve. The biggest "pitfall" in off-set printing is the "sameness" which can result from the lack of careful planning.

Make no mistake about the difference between off-set and letter-press printing. Letter-press is the professional way of printing a newspaper. The possibilities of off-set are just now being explored. Unless your high school has its own printing plant, off-set printing should be investigated. It will probably add to the number of issues your staff can print; and the more issues your staff prints, the more journalistic experience they are obtaining.

Off-set printing is making a great contribution to the high school press. Its future is bright primarily because the costs involved in using letter-press effectively eclipse its advantages.

Would A News Magazine Serve Your Purpose Better?

By Granger Gibbons

Adviser, "Mackenzie Dial," monthly news magazine of the MacKenzie High School (enrollment 2,525), Detroit, Michigan.

Looking for something a bit different? Idea for a column? Feature? Change of format? If the latter intrigues you, perhaps the news magazine is the answer.

Although in recent years commercial publications in this format have enjoyed a popularity and financial success, numerically they are few, as they are in the sphere of student publications. In national press judgments, which may include entries from over a thousand schools, usually the news magazines number fewer than ten. In a style-conscious age, then, this format remains something different and achieves a distinction in itself.

In the case of the Mackenzie High Dial, these differences are apparent at a glance. First is the handy, tabloid size, with pages 9 by 12 inches overall. Second is the number of pages, 16 plus cover (adding four more).

A cover offers possibilities in itself, namely, the use of color, the cover photo, cutline, and ears.

Along with the cover pic, the Dial uses some 25 photos each issue, including half-, one-, and two-column cuts, plus one or more hand drawn sketches.

Ten of the photos are portraits of five boys and five girls arranged in two page-length panels which enclose ten descriptive paragraphs.

The fifteen remaining pictures make it possible to have at least one on each page, whether news or feature.

Just as on the regular paper, the printed material in the news maga-

zine falls readily into the news and feature divisions. In the Dial, pages three through eight comprise the news section.

Each issue the news editor must select the lead story for page three, and the second lead for page five, both of which will be featured by two-column cuts. One story each on pages four, six and/or seven will be selected for one-column pics, and two more selected at random for half-columns.

With the exception of page two, the editorial page under the direct control of the editor in chief, all other pages are the concern of the feature editor. On these ten pages, including page one and the inside back cover, are found a variety of features and columns:

We Present (pics and paragraphs of ten students); Book Reviews; Stocks and Classics (autos); Boys' Sports; Girls' Sports; After Hours (clubs); Record Ramblings; Alumni; Dialing at Random (roving reporter); Quidnunc (humor); The Producing Pen (creative writing); and Personalities Plus (interview).

Pictures of varying size appear on all but two of the feature pages, and these two are often set off by hand-drawn, illustrative cuts.

It is apparent, then, that photography is emphasized in the news magazine, and constitutes one of its most appealing points. Two or three boys can handle this chore without undue strain.

Usually the one with the smallest camera (often a 35mm) will take the portraits for We Present plus

any half-columns needed, while the other two with larger cameras (press style, reflex, or folding) will divide the news and feature pics. With the title of head photographer goes the distinction of taking the cover shot.

The opportunities for departmentalization inherent in the magazine set-up are apparent in the variety of news and feature columns. At present the Dial has fifteen distinct columns.

Since many of these occupy an entire page, several columnists are page editors, planning the picture, writing the cutline, and doing the paste-up. The effect is that, besides the news and feature editorships, the magazine utilizes a number of sub-editors whose names appear each issue at the top of various pages and features.

Mackenzie High has published its monthly news magazine since March, 1948. Then, as now, it consisted of 16 pages plus the cover.

During the past ten years rising costs have presented a problem, probably more acute for magazines because of the additional cost of engravings.

From an enrollment of 2525 the Dial draws orders for some 2000 copies per issue. The cost to the student is 20 cents per copy for four issues, totalling 80 cents per semester.

The magazine is printed commercially on enamelled stock (hence expensively). Additional cost items are the binding (stapling) and reimbursements to photographers for paper, develop-er, and bulbs.

On an average the Dial carries from 140 to 180 column inches of ads each issue. At one dollar per column inch (standard rate in Detroit) this income over that from subscriptions allows the business

staff just enough margin to break even under present costs.

The emphasis on photos, while entailing some extra expense, pays very worthwhile dividends.

Every staff and sponsor know the lift given a club or school project by a picture in the school publication. News coverage alone is never so much appreciated.

The young photographers, too, have an excellent chance to acquire on-the-job experience, poise, and maturity.

Whenever boys are needed, a message to the camera club sponsor, or a few words spoken to a boys' occupational planning class is sufficient to uncover the would-be Dial photographer. Several of these boys after graduation have entered the professional field, and others have proceeded to university publications.

With its many facets, the news magazine succeeds in getting a sizeable number of people into the act. Most of the fifteen columns, for instance, have co-editors, and these, added to the news staff, bring the number of students active on the editorial staff to thirty, occasionally forty.

This format, then, does not restrict the work to a few, but rather brings together young people of widely different tastes and aptitudes in an integrated, productive program.

Even though the pictures and binding raise costs over the regular newspaper, these additional fees can be managed if sufficient ads are available. As shown, the total semester cost to the subscriber, 80 cents for four magazines, compares favorably with the cost of newspapers, which average 60 to 75 cents for five to seven papers.

Since the magazine appeals to the collector's instinct, many stu-

dents keep a complete file of Dials issued during their junior and senior years, some even longer. For the news magazine is a tradition at Mackenzie High, a tradition that could not be changed without a real sense of loss.

In national and local press associations the Dial has earned honors and recognition, and has become

one of the school's marks of distinction.

If, then, a publications staff is seeking a format that gives a pictorial record of school life, displays the news in the modern manner, and at the same time encourages greater student participation, the news magazine might well be the answer.

How Journalism Advisers Can Help Their Colleagues Get A 'By-Line'

By Harold Hainfield

Adviser, "Roosevelt Review," Roosevelt School, Union City, New Jersey.

In recent years, school administrators have become increasingly aware of their responsibility in school-community relations. Keeping the community informed of the aims and accomplishments of the school has assumed greater importance. No phase of the school relations program should be overlooked. Writing for other educational publications and magazines is an effective means of bringing the successful methods, materials, projects, and ideas of your faculty, administration, and even students to other educators.

The journalism adviser can aid teachers and the administration in preparing material to be submitted for publication. As a rule, the adviser is familiar with the curriculum, clubs, athletics and other phases of school life. A well organized staff of reporters should cover events and happenings of the school program. You can spot the different, the unusual approach to a school activity. It may be a new teaching technique, a teacher-written play, special songs prepared for a holiday, a revised or different type of football offense or defense, new cheers by the cheerleaders, or a hundred-and-one other activities.

Why not suggest that the adviser, sponsor, or teacher prepare the material for possible publication. You'd be willing to help get it in shape.

The journalism adviser is usually a camera fan and knows the photographers on the school yearbook and newspaper staff. He can get the necessary illustrations for the article. Educational journals are becoming increasingly visual. Clear photographs are often desired by the editor. The capable art students are familiar to the journalism teacher. If black-and-white illustrations seem necessary for the article, these can also be prepared by the art staff, with the appropriate credit line.

Editors are frequently looking for the "How to do it" type of article. Getting successful methods and projects into print will aid others in the use of newer materials and ideas in their instruction.

With your colleague, scan through the journal of his field of education and those of a related area. It might be possible to consider three or four possible publications in this way. For example, a description of a student visualized unit in astronomy. There is the

possibility of the science education journals as well as audio-visual journals. Check the masthead and note the name of the editor. It is better to address him personally. Note the number, length and type of articles that are published in the magazine. One publication may have six or eight lengthy articles while another may have a dozen shorter ones. For success in getting first articles accepted, choose the one with the shorter articles. Don't overlook the possibilities of your state educational association's publications. Many larger cities also publish school magazines to which teachers might contribute material.

A short outline of the article is helpful. It can also be helpful to speak the material into a tape or wire recorder and listening to it. Making notes from the playback can aid in getting the material into better shape. In preparing articles, the message should be simple and clear. Choose a lively, interesting style rather than that of a thesis. Write on what is being done rather than what should be done.

Use short sentences and short paragraphs to insure clearness of thought in setting forth such new ideas. Correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization are imperative in writing for publication. The journalism teacher has contact with administrators, curriculum specialists, department heads, supervisors, and teachers. When a member of the staff has a solution to an educational problem, an improved method of presentation, or other valuable contribution, why not suggest sharing the idea?

Suggestions for submitting material to editors.

1. Use a typewriter with clean type and a good ribbon. Use at least double spacing, preferably triple spacing.
2. Leave sufficient margins for the editor's changes.
3. Submit illustrative sketches on white paper. Use black India ink.
4. Submit contrasty 5 x 7 or 8 x 10-inch glossy prints to go with articles.
5. Submit all material together, not piecemeal.
6. Enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope and a post card. If the material is accepted, the editor will have the card handy to inform you of this. If the material is to be returned with suggestions, the envelope will get it back sooner.
7. Submit the material to one editor at a time. If you don't hear from him in a month or so, send a letter asking his plans for the material.
8. Protect photographs and illustrations with heavy cardboard and mark the envelope "Contains Photographs, Please Do Not Bend."
9. Send the material by first class mail.

Editors of educational journals welcome practical articles reporting successful experiments and accomplishments. They are interested in units, courses, administrative procedures, school programs, materials, and activities. Don't give up — the journalism adviser can help you get these ideas into print. If the material is not accepted, try again. Most editors will give a reason for returning the material if it is not accepted. It may only be necessary to rewrite according to his suggestions.

You aren't going to make much money writing for educational journals. Most editors will send you a few extra copies of the magazine. However, much pride and satisfaction can be gained.

Guide To Good Books

By Hans Christian Adamson

U. S. Air Force, retired. Author in the fields of aviation, astronomy, popular science, biography, history, transportation, nature, etc. The reviews appearing in this May 1955 issue of the Columbia Scholastic Press Advisers Association Bulletin, published quarterly at Columbia University in the City of New York, are also distributed to four hundred United States Armed Services libraries in thirty-six Commands throughout the world. Readers please address all inquiries regarding "Guide To Good Books" to: Hans Christian Adamson, P. O. Box No. 67, Saratoga, California.

There is a magnetic force within *A Crossbowman's Story* (Knopf — \$3.95) that transports the reader back through time and space to the days when the Amazon River, and its entire basin, was unknown to white explorers. In this volume, George Millar unrolls the colorful and vivid panorama of the virgin river as seen through the eyes of Isasago, whose crossbow was in the service of Francis De Orellana. History records how the latter, in exploring the Amazon basin east of Equador was separated from Governor Gonzalo Pizarro and led a small but brave band of Spaniards down the then nameless Amazon to the Atlantic Ocean. Against this sweeping background of fact, the author has built a fast-moving, suspense-laden adventure story. As he follows the day-to-day combat against death from poisoned arrows or the tortures of starvation, the reader, more and more, identifies himself with the stout-hearted little band and emerges at the mouth of the river with his thirst for adventure fully satisfied.

In the early days of World War II, Serge Vaculik escaped from Nazi serfdom in his native Czecho-

slovakia. After a long and tedious journey by way of France, Spain, and Portugal — broken by frequent arrests — the author reached England where he was promptly jailed as a potential Nazi spy. In time, however, he was cleared and permitted to enter the Free French Forces then being organized in England under De Gaulle. However, Vaculik's destiny pointed in another direction. He was shunted into Air Commando assignments in the RAF and made several parachute sorties into German-held France. As the pitcher went to the well once too often, so Serge made one parachute hop too many. The last one landed him into German capture. Up to this point enough has happened to the author to fill an ordinary book, but actually, here is where *Air Commando* (Dutton — \$4.00) develops its full power. At the very moment when a firing squad makes him its target, the author escapes and, with the assistance of French Resistance forces, finds refuge in the "underground." As the publishers say, the book is "Intense. Incredible." Here is world war from the underground angle; how resistance forces oper-

ated; how sabotage groups made life difficult and uncertain for occupying Nazi units.

Carl Cramer, whose many river books entitles him to the name Father of Waters, has written another history of another famous stream, this time *The Susquehanna* (Rinehart — \$5.00). Well illustrated, the book makes it the twenty-fourth in the Rinehart River Series which has won well earned nationwide respect for the masterly unfolding of the lives and sagas of our important waterways as built by Mother Nature long before the coming of man. The millions of words Mr. Cramer had written on this river subject have neither slowed his style nor dulled his wit and faded his charm. His ability to make the history of *The Susquehanna* come to life is as entertaining as ever. It ripples on with a steady flow of anecdote, folk-lore, and history in peace and in war, in commerce and romance.

Three cheers for *Doc Holliday* (Little Brown — \$4.50) by John Myers Myers. If this is the type of biographical narrative we may expect in the future from this author, the sooner and the more, the better. *Doc Holliday* is the life history of John Henry Holliday, a veritable Satan in human guise. He was a boom-town gambler and killer who killed for the mere joy of seeing men shrivel with fear as they faced his well-aimed pistol. Doc was born in Georgia and started out as a dentist. Tuberculosis compelled him to go west, where he soon changed from drawing teeth to drawing cards in stud-poker and six-shooters in coldly-provoked bar-room brawls. Among the pages of *Doc Holliday* one meets some interesting people, including Wyatt Earp and other famous gun-slingers with or against the law.

In *The Freedom Song* (Holt — \$3.50) Neill C. Wilson has created an appealing vehicle for a novel that attempts to trace the birth and development of the stirring music that became the Battle Hymn of the Republic. While this is the book's main theme, there is a gripping but rather shaming fascination in the manner it unfolds the inhuman and degrading relationship between human slaves and their masters. From cradle to manhood, the reader follows the life of Prome, a slave who serves his young master, son of a collapsing plantation dynasty. An attractive feature of this well-put-together novel is that the author does not attempt to preach. He lets the awful facts speak for themselves.

From where I sit, it looks as if *Grand Motel* (Greenberg — \$3.50) has that rare quality out of which box office successes grow. Being a thinly disguised autobiography of a man and wife who entered the motel business to make a living, it is rich in human interest material. Beyond that it deals with a rather new but true American institution, namely the mid-20th Century way-side hostelry where refuge is given to man and motor — but not to babes or beasts. In this book, the authors, William and Milarde Brent, learn about the motel business the hard way. Their teachers are Pa and Ma Boatwright, owners of the Ritz Motel in a small California town. Amusing is the manner in which the Boatwrights steal the show and dominate the book. The creation of this fascinating pair comes close to being sheer comedy genius. One can clearly see them being done on the screen by W. C. Fields and Marie Dressler — or their present day equivalents, if any exist.

Robert Standish, a master crafts-

man in the writing game, does it again in *Escape From Pimlico* (Macmillan — \$3.50). Here the author of *Elephant Walk* and *The Three Bamboos* produces another novel where his unusual capacity for plot development and character portrayal has full play. In his highly individual style, which is simple yet penetrating, Mr. Standish produces a group of unusual people which, for all their off-beat characteristics, are thoroughly believable. The story takes place in the British West Indies during the days when U. S. Prohibition laws made rum-running out of those wet little islands a profitable but violently dangerous kind of business.

The presentation by the editors of the Saturday Evening Post of their annual crop of best yarns in book form has become quite an annual event in the reading world. Now at hand is *Post Stories — 1955* (Random House — \$3.50). Among its twenty selections are stories typical of the best short stories by the masters who told them. Among contributors are Paul Gallico, Jack Schaefer, Lucy Cundiff, Oliver LaFarge, Hugh Herbert, Mackinlay Kantor, and Kay Boyle. In subjects they range from Indian Fighters of the Old West to the battle of modern youth to aid in the enforcement of law and order. Humor — action — softly tender tales — and explosive adventure.

The least flattering portrayal of Lady Hamilton — the lovelight of Admiral Nelson — ever painted is to be found in E. W. Kenyon's novel about that lady, her life and times and called *Emma* (Crowell — \$3.95). According to the author's way of looking at this Lady, the Lady was not a Lady by any manner of means. Just how much is truth and how little is fiction as

regards this "biography" of Emma Cadogan, a greater expert than I must decide. But from where I sit, the book makes interesting and fascinating reading. How this woman of easy virtue could worm herself into high society, become the wife of the British Ambassador to Italy and the sweetheart of Admiral Lord Nelson challenges the imagination. But, above and beyond that, Mr. Kenyon has done an excellent job of making Emma come to life.

When it comes to chuckles — it is a long time between books by Theodore Bonnet. Quite a few years ago he took a well-aimed sock at our risibilities with a charming little Victorian book called *The Mudlark* in which the impossible became the commonplace at the Court of England's primly regal Queen. Now, Mr. Bonnet tickles our risibilities again by means of *Dutch* (Doubleday — \$3.95). Here the plot revolves about the discovery, in a musty little California bar-room, of a real Rembrandt. How this discovery, by a down-at-the-heels wandering artist, affects the lives of a number of people makes entertaining reading. This despite the fact that Mr. Bonnet's style is not the most readable in the world. Some of his sentences require high-powered concentration. This is not for quick reading in a brief moment.

Baseball fans — and quite a few others — will welcome two books on the subject of what used to be the nation's favorite sport before TV wrassling and Jack-o-the-Beanstalk basketball. First of these is *My Own Particular Screwball* (Doubleday — \$3.50) a highly informal autobiography by Al Schacht. In his book the player, who was called The Clown Prince of Baseball, outlines his life history

starting with his mother. This little lady hated the thought of her son being a baseball player and mainly because her dream was to see him become a Rabbi. Almost four decades of big league baseball are covered in this biography which is, as one might hope and expect, a veritable gallery of the star players of those years in both major leagues. There are wide layers of zany recollections in Schacht's *Particular Screwball*, and now and then it seems as if the author-player will strain a tendon in reaching for an outfield point of humor. But this rather natural tendency is amply compensated for by the rich veins of real, human-interest anecdotes of diamond, club house, and training camp.

The other baseball book is a novel by Eliot Asinof called *Man On Spikes* (McGraw-Hill — \$3.75). With a candidness that may contain potential truth than outright fiction, Mr. Asinof reveals the long, hard and frustrating road a young man must travel in the world of professional baseball to come within even reach of the top. This is a first novel by an author whose short-stories are quite well known. His understanding of baseball is best explained by noting that, for several years, he was a member of several minor league teams operated by the "farm system" of the Phillies. There is a tendency in the story to preach but since it, by and large, does not slow or alter the pace of the main tale, no particular damage — perhaps even a bit of good — is incurred.

The new picture in international relations wherein large corporations unite with diplomats in conducting American affairs abroad is given sharp focus in *The Strong Box* (Houghton-Mifflin Co. — \$3.75). The facile pen of Howard

Swiggett, who gave us *The Power* and *The Prize*, finds full play in this rather unusual plot-approach to reveal the new kind of Dollar Diplomacy which may, or may not, have come into being since World War II. In this exciting tale the plot turns upon the sudden death of a Corporation Diplomat whose key post in London is vacated through his sudden death by heart failure. The tangled web that pops out into the open, through the existence of important and secret papers in his strongbox, creates a high tension situation in London, Washington, and other locales where international volcanoes are near the eruptive stages.

At first blush, *Scotland Yard* (Random House — \$5.00) by Sir Harold Scott, is somewhat disappointing. It appears to approach the task of telling the story how famous Scotland Yard operates from the standpoint and in the manner of a platform lecturer. Fortunately for the reader that particular approach justifies itself before the perusal is many pages old. It reveals that Sir Harold, who was Commissioner of London's Metropolitan Police from 1945 to 1953, tells the inside stories of some of England's most harrowing crimes through the operational procedures of the "Yard" itself. Therefore, in no time at all, it seems as if the reader is a witness to the solving of crimes instead of merely reading a series of cut and dried case histories. I have never come upon this technique before, but it certainly lends charm to the reading of police records. Incidentally, if these cases constitute proof — and they certainly should — the real Scotland Yard is as good, or even better, than the fictional Scotland Yard at nailing and jailing criminals.

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